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DE RUEHOT #0803 1651959  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
O 131959Z JUN 08  
FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8032  
INFO RUCNCAN/ALL CANADIAN POSTS COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEHOO/CHINA POSTS COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

UNCLAS OTTAWA 000803

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A  
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SUBJECT: CANADIAN PARLIAMENTARIANS CALL ON CHINA TO  
NEGOTIATE WITH DALAI LAMA

REF: OTTAWA 407

1. (U) Senator Consiglio Di Nino, chairman of the Canadian Senate's Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade as well as head of the "Parliamentary Friends of Tibet" group, on June 13 shared with PolMinCouns a copy of a letter to Chinese President Hu Jintao calling for "earnest" negotiations with the Dalai Lama. (Full text in para 2.) 102 Members of Parliament -- primarily from the three opposition parties (including leaders of the two smaller ones as well as the shadow foreign minister from the Official Opposition Liberal Party) but also including 17 members from the ruling Conservative Party -- and Senators co-signed the letter. Parliament in 2006 granted honorary Canadian citizenship to the Dalai Lama, who last met with Prime Minister Stephen Harper in Ottawa on October 29, 2007. Members of "Parliamentary Friends of Tibet" separately met with the Dalai Lama in April 2008, but not in Canada.

2. (U) Begin text

June 6, 2008

President Hu Jintao  
President of the People's Republic of China  
Office of the President  
Beijing  
People's Republic of China

Dear President Hu,

In the spirit of friendship and respect, we offer our cooperation in finding a solution to the longstanding Tibetan dispute.

It seems to us an honourable resolution is attainable. Your government is seeking assurances that Tibet will be an integral part of a sovereign China. His Holiness the Dalai Lama has accepted this as a condition for declaring the Tibetan Plateau a genuinely autonomous region where Tibetans can speak their language, practise their religion and cherish their culture.

Mr. President, while encouraged by your government's renewal of contact with the Dalai Lama's representatives, we strongly urge that negotiations begin in earnest with a firm commitment to reach a settlement within a reasonable timeframe. What is now required is trust and goodwill from each side to craft an agreement that achieves both China's objectives and the Tibetan people's aspirations.

We respectfully offer whatever assistance we may be able to provide to bring this dispute to a successful conclusion.

Sincerely,

/s/

end text

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